

**SAUL CENTERS, INC.**

**LANSDOWNE VILLAGE GREENS TOWN CENTER  
COMPREHENSIVE SIGN PLAN AMENDMENT  
ZMOD 2008-0009**

**STATEMENT OF JUSTIFICATION**

**INTRODUCTION**

Saul Centers, Inc., (the "Applicant") is requesting an amendment of the Lansdowne Village Greens Town Center Comprehensive Sign Plan approved by the County in October 2006 (ZMOD 2006-0004) (the "Town Center Sign Plan") to expand the area of the approved Town Center Sign Plan to cover the office, retail and residential uses located primarily along Diamond Lake Drive within the Town Center Core. Diamond Lake Drive is the main access point to the Town Center from Riverside Parkway. This expanded sign plan area identified in this application, ZMOD 2008-0009 (the "Application"), will utilize many sign types included in the approved Town Center Sign Plan.

**PROJECT LOCATION AND OVERVIEW**

Lansdowne Village Greens is zoned PD-TC and is designated for retail, office and residential uses on the approved Lansdowne Village Greens Concept Development Plan (ZMAP 2003-0006). The Town Center area is generally located north of Route 7, east of Belmont Ridge Road/Route 659, and south of Riverside Parkway. The Lansdowne Town Center is characterized as a residential, retail and office development that embraces a Main Street typology utilizing multi-story mixed-use buildings, as well as free-standing buildings, with a total land area of approximately 23.37 acres.

**PROPOSED SIGNAGE FOR EXPANDED AREA**

The approved Town Center Sign Plan includes signs for locating and identifying the Town Center businesses and services, and signs for the sales and marketing of the retail stores and office tenants, as well as informational signs for the benefit of customers and visitors. All the signs are designed to be complementary to the architecture and subordinate to the mix of permitted uses. The Applicant proposes to utilize several of the previously approved sign types, identified below, for the mixed-use and commercial buildings located within the expanded sign plan area.

The sign plan booklet submitted for the review of the Application includes those pages of the approved Town Center Sign Plan that identify sign types that are requested for the expanded sign plan area, as well as pages that identify new sign types. All pages of the Application's sign plan booklet that identify the locations and types of signs unique to the Application are identified with an "a" (e.g., "4a"). For ease of administration, it is the Applicant's intent to insert the approved "a" pages into the approved Town Center Sign Plan booklet so that all signage approved for the Lansdowne Village Greens Town Center under ZMOD 2006-0004 and ZMOD 2008-0009 will be contained in one comprehensive sign plan booklet.

The approved Town Center Sign Plan sign types proposed for the expanded sign plan area are identified in the Application as follows:

- Project Entry Monument: Type P1 (pages 8 through 10)
- Site Directional: Type P2 (page 11)
- Pedestrian Directory: Type P3 (page 12)
- Light Pole Signs: Type P5 (including light pole banners: Type P5.1) (pages 13 through 15)
- Office Building Address - Primary: Type UP1 (pages 17 and 18)
- Office Tenant Signs: Type UP2.2 (pages 20 and 20a)
- In-Line Retail Center Signs: Type UP5 (pages 22 through 23a)
- Building Mounted Project Identification Signs: Type UP7 (pages 29 and 29a)

The following new sign types are proposed to identify the residential uses:

- Project Entry Monument (Residential): Type P7 (page 16a)
- Residential Address Signage: Type UP3 (page 19a)

The locations of all of the above-referenced signs proposed for the Application are identified on page 4a.

In addition, the Applicant proposes that the following sign types included in the approved Town Center Sign Plan be permitted at various locations throughout the expanded sign plan area:

- Tenant Sidewalk Signs: Type UP8 (page 30)
- Housekeeping Signs – Small – Permanent: Type HP1 (page 31)
- Housekeeping Signs – Small – Temporary: Type HT1 (page 32)
- Housekeeping Signs – Large – Temporary: Type HT2 (page 33)
- Marketing Signs – Commercial: Type M1 (page 34)

## SUMMARY

The expanded sign plan area proposed by the Application covers the retail, office and residential uses within the mixed-use buildings along Diamond Lake Drive, the Town Center's main access route from Riverside Parkway, and along Town Green Drive. This Application provides for a continuity of coordinated signage within the Town Center and provides signage that will enhance the attractiveness of the Town Center and will assist in the efficient and safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians. The Applicant respectfully requests favorable consideration of this Application by the Staff, the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors.

## MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

### 1993 ZONING ORDINANCE SECTION 6-1211(E)

- Matter 1. *Whether the proposed zoning district classification is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.*

The Lansdowne Village Greens Town Center is subject to the Revised General Plan's Suburban Policy Area land use recommendations. In particular, the Town Center is designated as Keynote Employment and is zoned PD-TC.

- Matter 2. *Whether there are any changed or changing conditions in the area affected that make the proposed rezoning appropriate.*

As a developing commercial center, it is especially important for the Town Center to implement a unified signage system to identify community facilities and to direct visitors, residents and employees to those facilities.

- Matter 3. *Whether the range of uses in the proposed zoning district classification are compatible with the uses permitted on other property in the immediate area.*

The proposed signs will not adversely impact adjacent uses.

- Matter 4. *Whether adequate utility, sewer and water, transportation, school and other facilities exist or can be provided to serve the uses that would be permitted on the property if it were rezoned.*

Not applicable to this application.

- Matter 5. *The effect of the proposed rezoning on the County's ground water supply.*

Not applicable to this application.

- Matter 6. *The effect of uses allowed by the proposed rezoning on the structural capacity of the soils.*

Not applicable to this application.

- Matter 7. *The impact that the uses that would be permitted if the property were rezoned will have upon the volume of vehicular and pedestrian traffic safety in the vicinity and whether the proposed rezoning uses sufficient measures to mitigate the impact of through construction traffic on existing neighborhoods and school areas.*

The proposed signs will be designed to located to effectively and efficiently guide vehicular traffic and pedestrians to their intended destinations. The directional signage will facilitate the safe movement of all traffic.

Matter 8. *Whether a reasonably viable economic use of the subject property exists under the current zoning.*

Not applicable to this application.

Matter 9. *The effect of the proposed rezoning on the environment or natural features, wildlife habitat, vegetation, water quality and air quality.*

Not applicable to this application.

Matter 10. *Whether the proposed rezoning encourages economic development activities in areas designated by the Comprehensive Plan and provides desirable employment and enlarges the tax base.*

The proposed signs will add to the attractiveness of the Town Center and enhance its economic activities.

Matter 11. *Whether the proposed rezoning considers the needs of agriculture, industry and businesses in future growth.*

Not applicable to this application.

Matter 12. *Whether the proposed rezoning considers the current and future requirements of the community as to land for various purposes as determined by population and economic studies.*

Not applicable to this application.

Matter 13. *Whether the proposed rezoning encourages the conservation of properties and their values and the encouragement of the most appropriate use of land throughout the County.*

Not applicable to this application.

Matter 14. *Whether the proposed rezoning considers trends of growth or changes, employment, and economic factors, the need for housing, probable future economic and population growth of the County, and the capacity of existing and/or planned public facilities and infrastructure.*

Not applicable to this application.

Matter 15. *The effect of the proposed rezoning to provide moderate housing by enhancing opportunities for all qualified residents of Loudoun County.*

Not applicable to this application.

Matter 16. *The effect of the rezoning on natural, scenic, archaeological, or historic features of significant importance.*

Not applicable to this application.

## PLANNING COMMISSION ISSUES REGARDING COMPREHENSIVE SIGN PLANS

The following discussion is based on the guidelines adopted by the Planning Commission in March 1999 to assist in the evaluation of comprehensive sign plans.

Criterion 1: *Will the number, location and size of signs proposed adequately help people find what they need without difficulty or confusion: (Are the signs visible to the driving public and located and sized to enable the public to make turns in a timely manner? Identify the criteria used to make this assessment, such as sign industry standards, etc. Is the modification the least amount needed to meet this criteria?)*

The proposed amendment of the Town Center Sign Plan will accomplish this objective. The signs will be located to adequately help customers and visitors people find the businesses and services within the Town Center without difficulty or confusion. The signs in the expanded sign plan area will utilize the sign standards approved for the existing Town Center Sign Plan.

Criterion 2: *Will the proposed signage have an adverse impact on the visual character of an area or provide an overload of graphic messages or displays in the environment of Loudoun County?*

The proposed signs are internal to the Town Center and the unified style will be an attractive addition to the area.

Criterion 3: *Does the proposed signage treat similar types of signs consistently?*

The proposed amended Town Center Sign Plan is a unified and coordinated program that employs a common theme and treats similar types of signs consistently.

Criterion 4: *Are the proposed signs subordinate to the structures and land use functions they reference and are they accessory components of an overall composition of architectural elements?*

The proposed signs are subordinate to the structures and land use functions and reflect the architectural theme of the Town Center elements.

Criterion 5: *Does the proposed signage encourage the general attractiveness, historic quality, and unique character of Loudoun County, and protect property values?*

The proposed signage will mirror the design theme approved for the existing Town Center Sign Plan.

Criterion 6: *Does the proposed signage represent a comprehensive sign plan that is coordinated/unified, in terms of design, lighting, materials, colors, landscaping, etc., that reflects unique character of the planned development?*

The proposed amended Town Center Sign Plan is coordinated and complements the architectural theme of the Town Center.

Criterion 7: *Does the site have unusual characteristics such as topography, size, configuration and the like which would warrant a modification?*

The proposed amended Town Center Sign Plan will ensure that all signage subject to the plan will be coordinated and will provide desirable continuity throughout the Town Center.

Criterion 8: *Is the proposed sign plan in conformance with the policies of the County's Comprehensive Plan?*

The proposed amended Town Center Sign Plan supports the goals and policies of the County's Comprehensive Plan by: (i) providing attractive, coordinated and unified signage that enhances the Town Center; and (ii) promoting safe and efficient movement and direction of vehicular and pedestrian traffic within the Town Center.